



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

NEWS RELEASE

Montana/Dakotas State Office

For Immediate Release – April 21, 2017

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Public invited to review and comment on land selection process

(BILLINGS, Mont.) – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is moving forward on a commitment to settle a debt owed to the State of Montana for well over a century.

The Act of Congress that granted Montana statehood in 1889 contained a provision granting two sections of land in every township to the state to help support public schools. A small amount of land, valued at about \$4 million in today's dollars, is still owed to the state.

The State of Montana and the BLM have been working together recently to complete the process. Out for public review and comment is an Environmental Assessment (EA) that addresses the potential suitability to assign just over 2,000 acres of land in Chouteau, Custer, and Hill counties. These parcels were part of a larger list of lands in which the State of Montana expressed interest in a December 2015 application with the BLM.

The EA is available online at the BLM's ePlanning website <http://bit.ly/2dqd7rR>.

Written comments on the EA should be addressed to the Montana/Dakotas State Office, 5001 Southgate Drive, Attn: MT-924, Billings, MT 59101. Comments on the EA must be received by close of business May 22, 2017.

If you do not want your personal contact information to be viewed by the public, then do not include it directly in your comment. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do so. Therefore, do not include information you want to remain private.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land for the American people, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2014, the BLM generated \$5.2 billion in receipts from public lands.